

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, it is time to raise the minimum wage. Today the minimum wage is \$4.25 an hour. It has not been changed in 4 years.

That means a person working full-time, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, will earn less than \$9,000, and has not seen a raise in 4 years of work.

Families cannot live on that. No one can raise a child on that.

There is a lot of talk about work, not welfare. But if a full-time, minimum-wage worker cannot even earn enough to reach the poverty line, work will not be a real alternative to welfare.

Millions of Americans are working hard, trying desperately to make ends meet, but still falling farther behind. That is not fair.

We must reward work, help families help themselves. The minimum wage must be raised to a livable wage.

#### LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. PORTMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, with the passage of the unfunded mandate reform bill and the balanced budget amendment, we are actually starting to change the way Washington works. We are laying the groundwork for a new era of accountability. The next important step is the line-item veto.

For too long Congress has sent the White House jumpacked, all-encompassing spending bills. This has meant the President has had to choose between signing unnecessary spending into law or shutting down the Government.

Every year questionable projects and tax benefits are included and buried in spending and tax bills. Let me give you a few examples. We have all heard them: \$500,000 to build the Lawrence Welk museum in North Dakota. Hundreds of millions to stockpile helium for the military, when we already have enough helium in storage to meet the entire world's needs for helium for the next 10 years; \$11.5 million for power plant modernization at the soon-to-be-closed Philadelphia Naval Shipyard; and \$25 million for an Arctic region supercomputer at the University of Alaska to study how to trap energy from the aurora borealis.

The line-item veto is needed because it would allow the President flexibility to weed out and strike other wasteful spending items in an otherwise good bill.

#### THE MINIMUM WAGE AND FAMILY VALUES

(Mr. DURBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. speaker, now this is the Republican Party you remember.

The Republican Party and Speaker GINGRICH oppose raising the minimum wage so hard-working Americans can earn a decent living. The same Republican Party which reveres family values, refuses a minimum-wage increase to the working mother trying to help her kids.

The same Republican Party which promises a tax cut for those earning \$200,000 a year, denies 45 cents an hour to workers trying to feed their families. And the same Republicans who promise welfare reform and would rather build orphanages than create a minimum wage so people can lift themselves off of the dole.

The Grand Old Party. A lot of new faces and high-flying rhetoric, and even a new contract, but the same Republican insensitivity to the needs of average people.

#### A HOT 2 YEARS

(Mr. DORNAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, these are going to be 2 very difficult years, and I am going to try and save my thunder for outside the Halls of this Chamber and for New Hampshire and Iowa and other places. But I think every American should read the front page story of the Washington Post today on Mr. Clinton. It goes into A-4, and opens up, rips off, every tragic scab and scar from the 1992 campaign. Bob Woodward's book "Agenda" on page 287 has Mr. Clinton yelling, it says, "—— you" at a U.S. Senator, BOB KERREY, a Medal of Honor winner.

I am telling all my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I saw George Stephanopoulos coming out of DICK GEPHARDT'S office the night before last. We know DICK has been in the press the last 2 days. Mr. Clinton is not going to be the nominee of your party. I believe it is going to be a Medal of Honor winner named BOB KERREY. That is going to create a lot of problems for our side.

Let us have a civil debate here. But when the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. DURBIN] gets up and hits my party, I have every right to say read "The Agenda," read "First in His Class," read the front page of the Post today. It is going to be a hot 2 years.

#### RAISE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of President Clinton's proposal to raise the minimum wage by just 45 cents an hour over each of the next 2 years. Those of you watching today need to notice that while we Democrats are talking about helping working families, speaker after speaker on the other side stands silent

on the increase in the minimum wage. They speak of anything but. That is because with inflation, the minimum wage has decreased almost 50 cents since 1991, and is currently only three-quarters of what it was in 1979.

How can we encourage people to get off of welfare when we do not provide them a decent wage? How can we say that we reward work over welfare when we do not provide the means by which an individual can achieve this goal?

Mr. Speaker, I applaud President Clinton's efforts, and I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this proposed increase.

#### DON'T LINK OUR SOVEREIGNTY TO MEXICO

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, is it in our best interest to link the economic security of this country to markets controlled by a nation with a record of bankruptcies and devaluations?

In fact is it proper to do free trade with a country that has a history of these devaluations, repudiations of debts and a country that lacks real democratic reforms? Mr. Speaker, I am concerned about President Clinton's decision to bail out Mexico.

Let us face the facts—Mexico's political system has not been reformed as rapidly as its economy, and therein lies the problem.

Government corruption continues, particularly in the form of bribes and kickbacks for government projects and there is a large black market. There is no middle class and most of the wealth is controlled by a few families.

Mexico's average inflation rate from 1980 to 1991 was 66.5 percent. There is a high level of regulation and there needs more privatization of government businesses.

If we are to rely on back door bailouts for countries that have this economic history, then I question the New World Economic Order.

Mr. Speaker, the President should not link our economic sovereignty to a nation that does not have sound economic and political policies.

#### TIME TO RAISE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, now I have heard it all. Now I have heard everything. At his press conference today Speaker GINGRICH was asked about the minimum wage. He was asked if he plans to support a minimum-wage increase. You know what he said? He said we cannot raise the minimum wage. We can't raise it above \$4.25. And do you know why? He said because of the problems with the Mexican economy. He